



President H. Clay Cummings

## H. Clay Cummings Dies Of Heart Attack Wed.

H. Clay Cummings, "father of the Wasatch Mountain State Park" and recently released president of the New Zealand Mission of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, died of a heart attack Wednesday morning, July 4th at his home in Heber.

Mr. Cummings was released from his assignment in New Zealand April 1 to take over direction of the new park. He was named the first superintendent of the park only Sunday. Until that time, he had been serving as project coordinator.

Mr. Cummings had been working strenuously on details for the park Tuesday when he attended meetings in both Provo and Salt Lake.

He met with State Road Commissioner Director C. Taylor Burton in Salt Lake on plans to develop a skyline drive in Wasatch County, and walked up all six floors of the new Capitol Building, reported his wife, and become ill a few hours later.

A life-long resident of Heber, Mr. Cummings held an impressive number of civic, Church and business positions.

He was mayor of Heber for four terms and served as a Wasatch County commissioner one term. He was also director of the State Wool Assn., president of the Heber Exchange, and a director of Oil, Inc.

He presided over the Wasatch Stake for 21 years and served as bishop of the Heber Second Ward following his second (Eastern States) mission. He filled his first mission in the Northern States.

He and Mrs. Cummings were called on a special assignment from the First Presidency at the New Zealand Temple Bureau of Information in August 1960. From that position, they were called to preside over the New Zealand in February 1961.

In 1959, he began to acquire land for the Wasatch Mountain State Park as resident negotiator for the State Parks and Recreation Commission. He negotiated the purchase of about 18,000 acres of land for the park at \$1,200,000.

Mr. Cummings was born Dec. 11, 1894 in Heber, son of Elisha J. and Hannah Mary Clegg Cummings. He married Ruby Nielson on Jan. 26, 1918 in San Diego, California, and the marriage was solemnized in the Salt Lake Temple in April of that year.

The couple had six children. They are: Mrs. Maurice (Yvonne) Miller, Provo; Veigh, Salt Lake; Kyle, Denver, Colo.; Melvin, E. Jay and LaVell, all of Heber. They also had 23 grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted on Saturday at 2 p. m. in the Wasatch Stake Tabernacle.

Services were: prayer at the mortuary, Francis Probst; prelude and postlude, Renee Carlile; Bishop Don Hicken officiated. Seated on the stand were representatives of the General Authorities of the LDS Church, Elders Mark E. Peterson, Harold B. Lee, and Antone R. Ivins, Bishop Writhlin and Bishop Simpson, President Richards of South Summit Stake, members of the Stake Parks Commission, missionaries who labored in the New Zealand Mission under President Cummings, the Wasatch Stake Presidency and the Second Ward Bishopric.

Invocation, Don Clyde; Bishop Hicken gave a brief history of the deceased, some personal thoughts and the deep appreciation of the family for kindnesses shown in many ways; The Choralettes sang, "Oh My Father", directed by Maxine Carlile with Barbara McDonald at the piano; first speaker, Nephi Probst; speaker, Don Worthington, one of the missionaries who worked with Pres. and Mrs. Cummings in New Zealand; remarks, Dwight Freeman of the State Parks Commission; vocal duet, "Evening prayer", Marjoria Provost and Roy Huffaker, accompanied by Renee Carlile; speaker, Elder Harold B. Lee; Choralettes led by Merle Rasband sang, "Life Eternal"; benediction, Pres. J Harold Call.

The grave was dedicated by Bp. Burton Van Wagoner.

Pallbearers were his sons, Veigh, Kyle, Melvin, E. Jay, LaVell and a son-in-law, Maurice Miller. The missionaries of the New Zealand Mission were honorary pallbearers.

Burial was in the Heber City Cemetery.



When a small boy of three years of age H. Clay Cummings stood by the bed side of his grandmother, Sarah Cummings, a few days before she died. She put her hand on his head and said, "Bless you, honey, some day you will be the President." This virtually came to pass and started with a call to be bishop of the Heber Second Ward in 1926. Eighteen months later he became first counselor in the Presidency of Wasatch Stake and served for ten years.

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On September 5, 1937, he was sustained as President of Wasatch Stake. For twenty one and a half years he consecrated his life to the service of his people. Their love was manifest for him at a testimonial held on July 29, 1954 in the Stake Tabernacle. The story of his life was depicted through music and films and many of the local saints paid tribute to his wife, his family and himself.

President Henry D. Moyle said on this occasion, "We have grown, in recent years, to look upon him as the Dean of the Stake Presidents of the Church, and to have, I was going to say, just as deepseated regard for him as you people who have had the privilege of living here in Wasatch Stake with him."

He was born on December 11, 1894 at Heber City, Utah, the son of Elisha Jones and Hannah Mary Clegg Cummings. He grew up in and followed the livestock industry. He was a naturalist and enjoyed the mountains, streams, and hills.

At the age of eighteen years he was called to fill a mission to the Northern States. Upon his return he registered at Utah State Agricultural College, where he met a girl from Preston, Idaho. A happy courtship was climaxed by marriage to Emma Ruby Nielson on January 26, 1918. To them were born six children, Yvonne, Veigh, Kyle, Melvin, EJay and LaVell.

His next assignment came on November 11, 1925 when he was called to fill a six months mission to the Eastern States.

During World War I he enlisted and joined Utah's own 145th Field Artillery Unit. He was transferred to the United States Air Force and sent to California for intensive training. He became a Lieutenant and pilot and served until the end of the war.

He was elected Mayor of Heber City four times and served in this office from 1928 to 1935. He was elected to the office of County Commissioner and served four years, from 1936 to 1939 inclusive.

He served as director and president in various business enterprises, was a member of the Forest Advisory Board, chairman of the Bureau of Land Management Advisory Board for fifteen years, director of the

Utah Valley Hospital during its construction, director of the Utah State Wool Growers and a member of the Board of Directors of the Deer Creek Reservoir during the construction of the dam.

He played an important role in the establishment of the Wasatch Mountain State Park, and then was called by the Church to fill a mission at the Hawaiian Temple grounds. Later he was called to serve at the New Zealand Temple bureau of information and in 1961 was appointed president of the New Zealand Mission of the Church. He returned home in the summer of 1962 to become the first superintendent of the Wasatch Mountain State Park, and only a few days after the appointment was stricken with a heart attack and died on July 4, 1962.

